

# Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

David Simpson, **David Alexander Simpson**

## Reference no: 2119

**Submitter Type:** Individual

### Clause

1. What process should the Government use to set a new emissions reduction target in legislation?

### Position

The Government sets a goal to reach net zero emissions by the second half of the century and the Climate Change Commission advises on the specific target for the Government to set later

### Notes

Important to retain flexibility.

### Clause

2. If the Government sets a 2050 target now, which is the best target for New Zealand?

### Position

Net Zero Carbon Dioxide - Reducing net carbon dioxide emissions to zero by 2050

### Notes

Virtually all of our non CO2 greenhouse gas emissions (N2O and CH4) are produced by our livestock. As New Zealand's economy depends heavily on our primary-produce exports, we are forced to carry this livestock and although these animals emit greenhouse gases in NZ, the produce is consumed by other countries - so NZ appears to emit the gases but it is in fact on behalf of others.

### Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

### Position

Domestic emissions reductions (including from new forest planting) and using some emissions reductions from overseas (international carbon units) that have strong environmental safeguards

### Notes

It may prove necessary in the future to purchase international carbon units to minimise any serious economic impact to a particular emissions-intensive industry that is important to our future well-being.

### Clause

4. Should the Zero Carbon Bill allow the 2050 target to be revised if circumstances change?

### Position

Yes

### Notes

Climate science is still developing and latest research shows that climate sensitivity to greenhouse gas emissions is at the lower end of IPCC projections. Current satellite upper troposphere temperature measurements show current temperature increase over the period January 1979 to May 2018 remains steady at 1.3C per 100 years. It is clearly prudent to retain as much flexibility as possible as climate science is able to more accurately forecast temperature rise in the future.

### Clause

5. The Government proposes that three emissions budgets of five years each (i.e. covering the next 15 years) be in place at any given time. Do you agree with this proposal?

### Position

Yes

### Notes

As per my response to question 4. (Climate science is still developing and latest research shows that climate sensitivity to greenhouse gas emissions is at the lower end of IPCC projections. Current satellite upper troposphere temperature measurements show current temperature increase over the period January 1979 to May 2018 remains steady at 1.3C per 100 years. It is clearly prudent to retain as much flexibility as possible as climate science is able to more accurately forecast temperature rise in the future.)

### Clause

6. Should the Government be able to alter the last emissions budget (i.e. furthest into the future)?

### Position

Yes - each incoming Government should have the option to review the third budget in the sequence

### Notes

As per my response to question 4. (Climate science is still developing and latest research shows that climate sensitivity to greenhouse gas emissions is at the lower end of IPCC projections. Current satellite upper troposphere temperature measurements show current temperature increase over the period January 1979 to May 2018 remains steady at 1.3C per 100 years. It is clearly prudent to retain as much flexibility as possible as climate science is able to more accurately forecast temperature rise in the future.)

**Clause**

7. Should the Government have the ability to review and adjust the second emissions budget within a specific range under exceptional circumstances? See p36 Our Climate Your Say

**Position**

Yes

**Notes**

As per my response to question 4. (Climate science is still developing and latest research shows that climate sensitivity to greenhouse gas emissions is at the lower end of IPCC projections. Current satellite upper troposphere temperature measurements show current temperature increase over the period January 1979 to May 2018 remains steady at 1.3C per 100 years. It is clearly prudent to retain as much flexibility as possible as climate science is able to more accurately forecast temperature rise in the future.)

**Clause**

8. Do you agree with the considerations we propose that the Government and the Climate Change Commission take into account when advising on and setting budgets? See p44 Our Climate Your Say

**Position**

Yes

**Notes**

However, as our total emissions are only 0.2% of total global emissions, we can have no measurable impact on global temperatures. Although we are obliged to do our fair share, our per capita CO2 emissions are already low (hydro and geothermal power production). Please also see my response to question 2. (Virtually all of our non CO2 greenhouse gas emissions (N2O and CH4) are produced by our livestock. As New Zealand's economy depends heavily on our primary-produce exports, we are forced to carry this livestock and although these animals emit greenhouse gases in NZ, the produce is consumed by other countries - so NZ appears to emit the gases but it is in fact on behalf of others.)

**Clause**

9. Should the Zero Carbon Bill require Governments to set out plans within a certain timeframe to achieve the emissions budgets?

**Position**

No

**Notes**

The more flexibility we have, the better. The future is uncertain and many past predictions of specific climate disasters that have made headlines have largely been overstated or are completely wrong. Our plans should be able to adapt quickly to the latest scientific findings.

**Clause**

10. What are the most important issues for the Government to consider in setting plans to meet budgets? For example, who do we need to work with, what else needs to be considered?

**Notes**

Economic impacts, cost of adaptation vs. mitigation, international progress and trends. Industry and farming should participate as well as representatives of regular citizens who will ultimately bear the cost.

**Clause**

11. The Government has proposed that the Climate Change Commission advises on and monitors New Zealand's progress towards its goals. Do you agree with these functions? See p42 Our Climate Your Say

**Position**

Yes

**Notes**

The Commission's function should be advisory and monitoring only. The final decision must always rest with the government as the representatives of voters, who will ultimately bear all the costs of any actions taken.

**Clause**

12. What role do you think the Climate Change Commission should have in relation to the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (NZ ETS)?

**Position**

Advising the Government on policy settings in the NZ ETS

**Notes**

See my response to question 11. (The Commission's function should be advisory only. The final decision must always rest with the government as the representatives of voters, who will ultimately bear all the costs of any actions taken.)

**Clause**

13. The Government has proposed that Climate Change Commissioners need to have a range of essential and desirable expertise. Do you agree with the proposed expertise? See p45 Our Climate Your Say

**Position**

Yes

**Notes**

Additionally, a intelligent regular citizen with lots of common sense representing the voters who can cut through "waffle" and ask searching questions of the commission expert members to expose any biases in their recommendations.

**Clause**

14. Do you think the Zero Carbon Bill should cover adapting to climate change?

**Position**

Yes

**Notes**

Adaptation is a much less expensive option than mitigation and is not only an essential component but possibly the most important single component.

**Clause**

15. The Government has proposed a number of new functions to help us adapt to climate change. Do you agree with the proposed functions? See p47 Our Climate Your Say

**Position**

Yes

**Notes**

The climate has always changed and of course will continue to change in the future. Many predictions from climate scientists at the more alarmist end of the spectrum (e.g. James Hansen, Michael Mann, Phil Jones, Kevin Trenberth, David Viner etc.) have proven to be either overstated or completely wrong and an accurate assessment of the impact of anthropogenic emissions is not possible. Any future predictions are "guesstimates" so the current policy of "ad hoc" responses is not necessarily all bad. Clearly, co-ordination across the country is necessary but I believe we should not try to "guess" the future too far ahead. By all means have the funds available and hopefully accumulating whilst utilising expert assessment of future impacts but regularly updated as actual data corrects projections and determines revised targets.

**Clause**

16. Should we explore setting up a targeted adaptation reporting power that could see some organisations share information on their exposure to climate change risks?

**Position**

No

**Notes**

This type of approach would open up the opportunity for partisan self-interest and non-scientific exaggeration.

**Clause**

Do you have any other comments you'd like to make?

**Notes**

I have separately submitted a more detailed submission that will amplify my comments herein.